

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing resources, said method comprising the steps of:
  - providing a finite number of resources for servicing requests;
  - quantifying, beyond mere binary quantification, "N" number of attributes at least one attribute of said resources, wherein N is at least one, thereby providing N number of quantified attributes;
  - receiving at least one request for at least one of said resources;
  - quantifying, beyond mere binary quantification, at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, thereby providing a quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request; and
  - based at least in part on said quantifying steps, determining at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one ~~request.~~ request; and
  - plotting said "N" number of quantified attributes within an N-dimensional space.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said resources include agents within a telephony call center.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one request includes a request from a caller to a telephony center.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said resources include resources within a computer system.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein said resources include resources selected from the group consisting of: data input resources, data output resources, data storage resources, and data processing resources.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of quantifying ~~at least one attribute~~ "N" number of attributes of said resources further includes:
  - quantifying two or more attributes of said resources.
7. (Canceled).
8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 8~~ claim 1 further including the step of:

plotting said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request within said N-dimensional space.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said determining step includes:

calculating the distance between said ~~quantified~~ "N" number of quantified attributes of said resources and said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request to determine at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said determining step includes: determining said at least one suitable resource from resources then available to immediately service said at least one request.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said determining step includes: determining said at least one suitable resource from all of said resources.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one attribute includes at least one skill possessed by said resources.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one attribute includes at least one functional capability possessed by said resources.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said quantifying, beyond mere binary quantification, at least one attribute ~~"N" number of attributes~~ of said resources further includes:

grading said ~~at least one attribute~~ "N" number of attributes of each of said resources along a scale.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request further includes:

grading said at least one attribute of each of said resources along a scale.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of allocating resources selected from a finite number of resources for servicing requests, said resources having at least one measurable functional attribute, said method comprising the steps of:

quantifying ~~at least one functional attribute~~ "N" number of functional attributes of said resources, ~~thereby resulting in N number of quantified functional attributes, wherein N is at least one and~~ wherein said quantifying said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ N functional attributes of said resources includes grading said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ N functional attributes of each of said resources along a scale having more than binary grades;

plotting said N number of quantified functional attributes within an N-dimensional space;

receiving at least one request for at least one of said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ N functional attributes;

quantifying ~~said at least one functional attribute~~ said at least one of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request, thereby resulting in quantified at least one of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request, wherein said quantifying said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ at least one of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request includes grading said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ at least one of said N functional attributes of each of said resources along a scale having more than binary grades; and

based at least in part on said quantifying steps, determining at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said resources include agents within a telephony call center.

21. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said at least one request includes a request from a caller to a telephony center.

22. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said resources include resources within a computer system.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein said resources include resources selected from the group consisting of: data input resources, data output resources, data storage resources, and data processing resources.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said step of quantifying ~~at least one functional attribute~~ N number of functional attributes of said resources further includes:

quantifying two or more functional attributes of said resources.

25. (Canceled).

26. (Canceled).

27. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 26~~ claim 19 further including the step of:

plotting said quantified ~~at least one functional attribute~~ at least one of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request within said N-dimensional space.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein said determining step includes:

calculating the distance between said ~~quantified~~ "N" number of quantified functional attributes of said resources and said quantified at least one of said N functional attributes ~~functional attribute~~ desired by said at least one request to determine at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request.

29. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said determining step includes: determining said at least one suitable resource from resources then available to immediately service said at least one request.

30. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said determining step includes: determining said at least one suitable resource from all of said resources.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said ~~at least one functional attribute~~ N number of functional attributes includes at least one skill possessed by said resources.

32. (Canceled).

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

34. (Canceled).

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

36. (Currently Amended) A resource management system for managing a finite number of resources for servicing requests, said resource management system comprising:  
means for gradationally quantifying ~~at least one attribute~~ "N" number of attributes of said resources, thereby resulting in N number of quantified attributes, wherein N is at least one and wherein said means for gradationally quantifying N number of attributes of said resources further includes means for grading said N number of attributes of each of said resources along a scale that includes more than two grades;  
means for plotting said N number of quantified attributes within an N-dimensional space;  
means for receiving at least one request for at least one of said resources;  
means for gradationally quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, thereby resulting in a quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, wherein said means for gradationally quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request further includes means for grading said at least one attribute of each of said resources along a scale that includes more than two grades; and  
means for determining at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request based at least in part on ~~said at least one quantified attribute~~ the N number of quantified attributes of said resources and ~~said at least one quantified at least one attribute~~ desired by said at least one request, wherein said means for determining computes a difference between the quantified ~~at least one attribute~~ N number of attributes of said resources and the quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request to identify at least one of said resources that is suitable for servicing said at least one request.

37. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 36 wherein said means for gradationally quantifying ~~at least one attribute~~ N number of attributes of said resources includes a computer processor executing computer software code.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 36 wherein said means for gradationally quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request includes a computer processor executing computer software code.

39. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said determining means includes a computer processor executing computer software code.

40. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said receiving means includes a connection to a network.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40 wherein said network is selected from the group consisting of:

public switched telephony network (PSTN), local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), the Internet, an Intranet, or any combination thereof.

42. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said receiving means includes a switching system.

43. (Original) The system of claim 42 wherein said switching system includes an ACD/PBX.

44. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said resources include agents within a telephony call center.

45. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said at least one request includes a request from a caller to a telephony center.

46. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said resources include resources within a computer system.

47. (Original) The system of claim 46 wherein said resources include resources selected from the group consisting of: data input resources, data output resources, data storage resources, and data processing resources.

48. (Canceled).

49. (Canceled).

50. (Currently Amended) The system of ~~claim 49~~ claim 36 wherein said means for gradationally quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request further includes:

means for plotting said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request within said N-dimensional space.

51. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 50 wherein said determining means includes:

means for calculating the distance between said ~~quantified~~ "N" number of quantified attributes of said resources and said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request to determine at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request.

52. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said determining means includes:  
means for determining said at least one suitable resource from resources then available to immediately service said at least one request.

53. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein said determining means includes:  
means for determining said at least one suitable resource from all of said resources.

54. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 36 wherein said ~~at least one attribute~~ N number of attributes includes at least one skill possessed by said resources.

55. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 36 wherein said ~~at least one attribute~~ N number of attributes includes at least one functional capability possessed by said resources.

56. (Canceled).

57. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 36 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

58. (Canceled).

59. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 36 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

60. (Currently Amended) A resource management system for managing a finite number of resources for servicing requests, said system comprising:

connection to a network capable of receiving at least one request for at least one of said resources;

memory for storing computer executable program code, wherein said computer executable program code includes code executable to quantify at least one attribute of said resources by assigning any of more than two quantifications to said at least one attribute of said resources, code executable to quantify at least one attribute desired by said at least one request by assigning any of more than two quantifications to said at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, and code executable to determine at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request based at least in part on said at least one quantified attribute of said resources and said at least one quantified attribute desired by said at least one request;

wherein said code executable to quantify at least one attribute of said resources further includes code executable to quantify "N" number of attributes of said resources, wherein N is at least one, thereby providing quantified "N" number of attributes, and code executable to plot said quantified "N" number of attributes within an N-dimensional space;

wherein said code executable to quantify at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, thereby providing quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request, further includes code executable to plot said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request within said N-dimensional space;

wherein said code executable to determine at least one suitable resource includes code executable to calculate the distance between said quantified "N" number of attributes of said resources and said quantified at least one attribute desired by said at least one request to determine at least one suitable resource for servicing said at least one request; and

processor for executing said computer executable program code.

61. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said network is selected from the group consisting of:

public switched telephony network (PSTN), local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), the Internet, an Intranet, or any combination thereof.

62. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said connection to a network includes a switching system.

63. (Original) The system of claim 62 wherein said switching system includes an ACD/PBX.



64. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said resources include agents within a telephony call center.

65. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said at least one request includes a request from a caller to a telephony center.

66. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said resources include resources within a computer system.

67. (Original) The system of claim 66 wherein said resources include resources selected from the group consisting of: data input resources, data output resources, data storage resources, and data processing resources.

68. - 71. (Canceled).

72. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said code executable to determine at least one suitable resource includes:

code executable to determine said at least one suitable resource from resources then available to immediately service said at least one request.

73. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said code executable to determine at least one suitable resource includes:

code executable to determine said at least one suitable resource from all of said resources.

74. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said at least one attribute includes at least one skill possessed by said resources.

75. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said at least one attribute includes at least one functional capability possessed by said resources.

76. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said code executable to quantify at least one attribute of said resources further includes:

code executable to grade said at least one attribute of each of said resources along a scale.

77. (Original) The system of claim 76 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

78. (Original) The system of claim 60 wherein said code executable to quantify at least one attribute desired by said at least one request further includes:

code executable to grade said at least one attribute of each of said resources along a scale.

79. (Original) The system of claim 78 wherein said scale is of 0 to 100.

80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request comprises utilizing at least one selected from the group consisting of:

demographics information, a profile for a requestor, and interactive voice response (IVR) interaction with the requestor.

81. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said receiving at least one request for at least one of said resources comprises:

receiving a target value of said at least one attribute desired by said at least one request and a close\_match modifier that indicates the closeness of said ~~quantified at least one attribute~~ N number of quantified attributes of said resources to the target value that is suitable for servicing said at least one request.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said quantifying at least one attribute desired by said at least one request comprises using information in a profile for a requestor of said at least one of said resources for performing said quantifying for a request from said requestor.

83. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said quantifying said at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request comprises using information in a profile for a requestor of said at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes for performing said quantifying for a request from said requestor.

84. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said receiving at least one request for said at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes comprises:

receiving a target value of said at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request and a close\_match modifier that indicates the closeness of said ~~quantified at least one functional attribute~~ N number of quantified functional attributes of said resources to the target value that is suitable for servicing said at least one request.

85. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19 further comprising wherein said receiving at least one request for said at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes comprises:

receiving a close\_match modifier that indicates how close said ~~quantified at least one functional attribute~~ N number of quantified functional attributes of said resources has to be to said quantified at least one ~~functional attribute~~ of said N functional attributes desired by said at least one request in order to be suitable for servicing said at least one request.